

Washington, D.C. - Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-8) departed for Iraq today as part of a bipartisan Congressional delegation trip to the region. Bean, who will be in Iraq for several days, will meet with high-ranking Iraqi and American government officials, U.S. military officers overseeing reconstruction and security operations, and men and women in uniform stationed in Iraq—including personnel from Illinois.

Bean's trip, organized by the House Armed Services Committee, comes ahead of the October 15th national referendum on the Iraqi Constitution drafted by the transitional Iraqi National Assembly. If the people approve the constitution, elections will be held to establish a permanent sovereign Iraqi government under the new national law.

"I look forward to meeting with our troops in person—and especially those brave men and women from Illinois," Bean said. "Like all Americans, my constituents are closely monitoring the progress of the Iraqi people in assuming responsibility for the security and governance of their own country. By traveling there, I will be able to observe our efforts firsthand, and provide an informed assessment of the situation on the ground. "

Congresswoman Bean will be available to speak to the press about her visit via telephone upon her return.

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